

A LETTER FROM THE COMMANDER



With this issue, *Cadenza* closes out six years of keeping our many friends and fans abreast of the wonderful programs, concerts and events that make up the public life of your United States Air Force Band. But this edition marks many more milestones that affect all of us, for this is also the final issue of 1999; a date with significance for most as the final months of the 20th century and the millennium. As I tried to decide what topic would be appropriate to such a milestone issue, I cannot help but return to the most valuable resources of The United States Air Force Band; namely the incred-

ible professionals that I have the honor to command. These world-class musicians that you support so well are true national treasures. You, our loyal audiences, know first-hand the brilliant level of performance and musicianship these outstanding airmen bring to every concert event. You have also repeatedly witnessed the expertise of our talented arranging staff and the superior audio engineer work of our Technical Support crew. There are others whose efforts are so very important, but because of the nature of their work are rarely seen; namely, our support areas of Operations, Supply, Public Affairs and Band Administration. I can think of no better topic than to use this historic issue of *Cadenza* to thank the numerous members of my command that work so tirelessly in the background making this organization the best it can be, each and every day.

One of The United States Air Force Band's primary tasks is to bring the musical heritage of this great nation and the message of the world's greatest Air Expeditionary Force to audiences around our country and the globe. Without the incredible work of Director of Operations CMSgt Glenda Shepela and her staff there would be no concerts to attend. The endless hours and long days required to put together all of the myriad logistical details of a concert tour have been honed to perfection by Director of Tours MSgt Douglas Jordan. His team of MSgt Jerry Thomas, TSgt Chuck Little and newest member MSgt Barbara Taylor are responsible for the incredible success of every tour of our major performing units for the past four years. SMSgt Beth Schouten's extraordinary determination and keen attention to detail has consistently led to success for every member who has submitted a travel voucher for expenses while contributing countless hours towards the development of a groundbreaking new travel pay system. Rounding out the Ops team are SMSgt Lauria Riley and SMSgt Bobie Coonin. Both of these individuals are the prototypical "do-what-it-takes" senior leaders that make Band Operations the finely tuned machine it is.

A squadron cannot exist for long without the equipment and supplies to do the job. No truer illustration of the phrase "behind-the-scenes" exists than that of CMSgt (sel) David James and his tireless Supply staff of MSgt Tony Baker and MSgt Craig LeDoux. These terrific leaders work day and night to ensure that The USAF Band is fully equipped with the finest instruments, electronics and uniforms, ensuring success at every performance, clinic, parade and ceremony. But most important to me and every member of this organization is the obvious care and desire to help shown by these professionals as they carry out their critical duties. Everyone can count on getting the assistance they need, and when they need it most.

The vital task of ensuring that the message of The Air Force Band is seen as well as heard falls to CMSgt Dana Steinhauser and his talented Public Affairs specialists. Over 25,000 devoted readers can attest to the impact of Editor MSgt Paul Swantek and *Cadenza*. TSgt Christine Adamick has excelled as CMSgt Steinhauser's assistant in the myriad tasks guaranteeing that public affairs materials and compact disc recordings are always on time to support mission success. Chief of Marketing/Media Relations and Guest Artist Coordinator CMSgt Daisy Jackson, who single-handedly has built the DAR Guest Artist Series into a concert vehicle of nationwide prominence, is a true Air Force Band star.

Every professional organization succeeds or fails by its administrative staff. No where is this truer than in The United States Air Force Band. CMSgt Mark Williams has built a team of experts that keep the most vital functions of this squadron in tip-top shape. SMSgt Kelly McDonough's organizational genius enables her to accurately manage the schedules of the commander, deputy commander and band manager, as well as achieving a 100% success rate in the critical task of monitoring and completing the yearly performance reports for all 209 members of this squadron. MSgt Jim Gaglione and TSgt Brenda Anthony are the "glue" that enable this diverse group of professionals to exist as The USAF Band. Their heroic efforts ensure that all matters pertaining to personnel, enlistments, military pay and all of the other "basics" are accurately accomplished. All of these issues are vital not only to the well being of every member of The Band, but their families as well.

I have been incredibly blessed with one of the finest senior staffs in the Air Force. It is impossible to put into words how much I value their loyalty and dedication to The USAF Band. First Sergeant MSgt Sandra Miller is one of my most trusted advisors, and a true advocate for the enlisted members of The USAF Band. CMSgt Mike Davis has many duties and a long successful history as Chief Arranger and yet he has hit the ground running as interim Band Manager. His knowledge and years of experience—which are equally matched by his deep concern for the welfare of every member of this organization—have proven invaluable to me as commander. Two newer members of the Squadron, 1Lt Keith Bland and 1Lt Chad Steffey, have already made great strides in continuing to build upon the success and reputation of the Air Force Strings and Singing Sergeants, respectively. Each of these fine young officers has quickly earned a place of respect among every member of this command.

I owe a personal debt of gratitude to my deputy commander, Major Frank Grzych. This outstanding officer has been my right hand and devoted assistant for the past four years. A brilliant commander in his own right, he has worked tirelessly on project after project ensuring that this squadron is the benchmark by which all other military musical organizations are judged. As associate conductor of The USAF Band, he has earned the praise and admiration of every performer in Hangar 2. His recent leadership of the Concert Band and Singing Sergeants on Fall Tour 1999 won rave reviews from audiences throughout the southeastern United States, and have marked him as one of the finest military bandleaders in the Department of Defense.

These tireless behind the scene workers are the unsung heroes—the lifeblood of every institution of this kind. They work long, hard hours yet are rarely given the chance to be seen or recognized by our many loyal friends and fans. To them as well as every member of my command, I offer my deepest thanks for your dedication and devotion to making The USAF Band the world renowned organization it is. Bravo on a job well done!

Lowell E. Graham, Colonel, USAF
Commander and Conductor